

# RAILWAY SAFETY

## UNDERSTANDING RAILWAY HAZARDS IN MONTANA



### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RAIL SAFETY IN MONTANA?

The Federal Railroad Administration holds the primary authority for regulating the safety of railroads throughout the nation. The state of Montana operates primarily under federal authority and works largely on the enforcement side. Regulation of mechanical defects falls under the Public Service Commission, and Montana's Rail Safety program currently consists of two mechanical inspectors.

### WHO RESPONDS TO A DERAILMENT WITH HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS?

Local first responders would be joined by the involved rail company's hazardous materials cleanup contractors. Locally controlled, regional assets can also respond based on the local needs. Depending on the size or risks of the derailment, the EPA and DEQ Emergency Response Teams would join the local unified command team to help stabilize the incident.



#### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HAZARDOUS CLEANUP?

The railroad company involved is the responsible party for cleanup following a derailment. Any hazmat spill on under tribal control is overseen by the tribe and the EPA. The EPA has authority on all federal railways. MT DEQ would oversee cleanup and hold the railroad company accountable for meeting the state's standards on all nontribal lands.



#### ARE MONTANA'S COMMUNITIES PREPARED FOR A CHEMICAL SPILL?

Each railway company has specific emergency plans at each terminal, and they have their own hazmat teams and response trailers with equipment and supplies for derailments and hazardous materials. The Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) have hazardous material plans to include processes such as a notification system, response procedures, and evacuation routes and plans.

### HOW CAN I BE PREPARED AND GET INVOLVED?

1. Build an [Emergency Supply Kit](#),
2. [Make a Family Emergency Plan](#).
3. Read more: [Hazardous Materials Ready.gov](#).

**To report any hazardous spill, dial 9-1-1.**

Contact your local fire department to learn about volunteer opportunities.

### WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Visit the following websites to learn more about railway safety:

- [Safety and Security | BNSF](#)
- [Safety at MRL - Montana Rail Link](#)
- [UP Safe Rail - Union Pacific](#)
- [Railroads and Hazmat Safety | Association of American Railroads](#)

Public learning opportunities exist through MRL and UP.